To: Tree City USA Communities

From: DCR Urban & Community Forestry staff

Date: January 1, 2014

RE: Tree City USA 2014 Applications (new and recertification) – DUE DEC. 31, 2014

Thank you for your interest in applying for or becoming recertified as a Tree City USA. Tree City USA is a national honor given by the Arbor Day Foundation (ADF). Each state is responsible for reviewing the applications and forwarding them to ADF. DCR Urban and Community Forestry staff reviews each application to make sure each is complete, accurately reflect your program, and have current information. We are all proud of what our Tree City USA communities accomplish. We appreciate the work you do to earn this special recognition and appreciate your additional efforts to maintain such high standards.

In order to assist you in submitting your [Online Web Portal](#) or [Paper Application](#), please use the following checklist to help you compile the needed information to complete the application. If you use the web portal, please be sure there is a *valid email address in the portal contact email field* as this is how we will communicate with you on your application.

- Your application MUST be submitted by **December 31, 2014**. Early applications are welcome – *and will help us help you if there is missing information.* Please note that the online portal will become active for 2014 applications in the fall of 2014.

    If using the paper version, please mail one ORIGINAL and one COPY of your application to:

    Mollie Freilicher
    Community Action Forester
    P.O. Box 484
    Amherst MA 01004

- Your re-certification application and online login information should have been mailed to you directly by the Arbor Day Foundation. Web portal and paper recertification, Growth Award and first time applications are available at:
    http://www.arborday.org/programs/treeCityUSA/apply.cfm

- The **actual signed application should be the cover sheet on the top of the application**, do not use binders or plastic covers when submitting your application. Simply staple or use a binder clip to secure the application together.

<div style="border:2px solid red; color:red; text-align:center">

Please do not e-mail us a copy of your application.
If you wish to file electronically, please use the online portal: https://portal.arborday.org/

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Below, please find detailed information on how to meet the **FOUR STANDARDS**:

☐ **STANDARD 1: Tree Board or Department**

- If you have a *department*, please enclose a description from a municipal annual report, budget justification or other existing description. If none of these exist, please describe where your department sits in municipal government, who staffs it, and what your responsibilities are.

- If you have a *tree board or committee*, please include the names of all members (including addresses/e-mails) and other documentation (if new: bylaws, brochure, mission statement, articles of incorporation, or minutes from adoption by town meeting or city council).

- For communities that share responsibilities with a non-profit partner, this application needs to be formally presented by the municipality with budget and program information representing both. Please be sure each partner is aware of the application's submittal.

- A narrative description of your program is always helpful.

☐ **STANDARD 2: Community Tree Ordinance:** Massachusetts' communities are automatically qualified for this criteria, *as long as you include one of the following documentations*:

- If you operate under the guidance of *M.G.L. Chapter 87*, please include **evidence that you enforce MGL Ch. 87** [a sample hearing notice (dated), correspondence] or that your city council or town meeting has adopted this law.

- If you have adopted a **new ordinance, subdivision regulation, or other forestry policy**, please include it with your application. Your ordinance should mention Chapter 87. You may also provide a **web link** to where it can be downloaded. (We are in the process of collecting digital copies of all state tree related ordinances.)

☐ **STANDARD 3: Community Forestry Program**

- **BUDGET:** Please include documentation for your total budget. **The budget must either be FY2014 or a budget for the calendar year of 2014**. Because you are applying for an award for 2014, we cannot accept FY'15 budgets. Please be sure that the budget **clearly shows budget numbers for the tree program** (not the entire DPW, for example). Make notes to link this budget to the budget worksheet. Please include **supporting documentation** from your municipality. Supporting documentation may include a budget printout, budget printed on letterhead, or letter on letterhead stating the tree budget.

- **Fill out the REQUIRED attached two-page worksheet from the DCR Urban and Community Forestry Program.** This is important in evaluating the overall performance of the Tree City program and helps us demonstrate where funding is needed. The budget figures must be supported by documentation.

- **WORKPLAN:** As a Tree City USA you are **required to submit an annual work plan**. This demonstrates that your community looks forward in planning for the year and that you have a systematic approach to your urban forestry program. A work plan that is updated frequently qualifies for this standard. Please include a total of trees planted, removed, and pruned in 2014. Sample work plans can be found at the end of this document.

- If you are applying for a **Growth Award,** please note this section must demonstrate a **budget increase.**

❑ **STANDARD 4: Arbor Day celebration and proclamation of Arbor Day.**
To meet this standard, your application must include:

- **Evidence of an Arbor Day celebration occurring in 2014**. This could be a dated clipping from the newspaper or a press release if the newspaper didn't cover the event; invitations; a program detailing speakers and entertainment for the event; thank you letters; speeches or speaking points or photographs. Photographs alone will not suffice.

- Likewise, the proclamation of Arbor Day, **signed** by your Mayor/Manager or Selectmen, must be **dated in 2014**. The proclamation does not have to proclaim the last Friday in April as Arbor Day. You may proclaim any day Arbor Day, but you must give the date of *your* Arbor Day. You do not need to include the original proclamation with your application. Please submit a copy.

- Please be cautious about combined Arbor Day and Earth Day observances. If you choose one celebration for these two holidays, please explicitly document the Arbor Day portion of the celebration as stated above.

- **Do not assume that Earth Day = Arbor Day.** Tree City USA applications are sent to the Arbor Day Foundation, thus this emphasis.

❑ **APPLICATION SIGNATURE** – Finally, **the application MUST be signed by the Mayor, City/Town Manager, or Board of Selectmen**. Applications signed only by the tree program manager are not acceptable. This is because we have had trouble in the past with program managers submitting applications without knowledge of the municipality.

❑ **Growth Award applicants:**
This award is intended to recognize special accomplishments of Tree City USA communities. The basis of the award is *growth* in the program, documented by a budget increase (could be in the form of a non-governmental grant, a new budget line item, a new piece of equipment, or new position). Then, special efforts and projects, described in the application, will qualify an applicant for the award. Annual programs, even if they are extraordinary, will not alone qualify for the award. Unfortunately, the intent of the award is not to be a higher tier of Tree City USA awards for well-established and well-funded programs to earn each year. **Please document your special program or growth area with attachments.**

QUESTIONS?
Please contact:
Mollie Freilicher   413-577-2966 mollie.freilicher@state.ma.us

Checklist Summary

- ❑ Application postmarked/delivered by **December 31, 2014** or apply online by December 31, 2014.
- ❑ If mailing a paper application, submit **original** and **one copy** of the entire application (not just the cover sheet).
- ❑ Standard 1: Provide documentation of department and/or tree board/committee.
- ❑ Standard 2:
  - o Attach documentation that the municipality has adopted Chapter 87 or evidence of enforcement of Chapter 87 (e.g., a tree hearing notice dated in 2014).
  - o Attach copy of municipal tree ordinance, if you have one (or provide a web link).
- ❑ Standard 3:
  - o Provide municipal budget documentation to back up your $2/capita budget figure (must be FY'13).
  - o Fill out the attached two-page budget worksheet (*Massachusetts 2014 TCUSA MA Budget Worksheet*).
  - o Attach municipal work plan with FY or calendar year 2014 accomplishments.
- ❑ Standard 4:
  - o Attach 2014 (dated and signed) Arbor Day Proclamation copy– do not send original.
  - o Attach evidence of 2014 Arbor Day celebration (dated).
- ❑ Application Signature
  - o **Signed by the Mayor, City/Town Manager, or Board of Selectmen.**

Please do not submit unnecessary amounts of information, or information that is not requested above.

Support letters are <u>not</u> needed for this application.

Massachusetts DCR Urban Forestry
TREE CITY USA PROGRAM
Standard 3 Worksheet (**NOTE**: two pages)

~ This form must be submitted with your paper application for Tree City USA~

COMMUNITY: _____   ☐ **FY 2014 or** ☐ **Calendar 2014**

COMMUNITY CAPACITY QUESTIONS:

1) Who manages public street trees in your community?

Name: _____ Title:_____

Contact: _____ Email:_____

What certifications or degrees are held by the Tree Warden, Arborist or other members of your department? (Provide title/certification/#)

Do you contract with arborists or urban forest professionals to assist in your community? For what purpose?

2) Does your community have a tree committee, citizen's group or non-profit organization that advocates for community trees (or other urban natural resources)?

Name of group: _____

Contact/e-mail (please attach e-mails/contact info as needed):_____

3) Do you have any kind of tree survey, inventory or resource assessment?
_____

When was it completed (and when updated, if ever)? _____

How have you used it? Actively, or does it 'sit on a shelf'?_____

4) Do you have a pest detection or monitoring protocol? _____

5) Does your community have any kind of Urban Forestry, Open Space or Natural Resources Management Plan (Please provide a web link or attach a copy).

☐ Urban Forestry Mgmt Plan (date:_____)   ☐ OTHER Natural Resource Mgmt Plan
☐ Municipal Open Space Plan (date:_____)   Please describe: _____

6) Cross-Program Communication: We encourage tree wardens to be involved in planning board, conservation commission and other such board decisions. How is cross-program communication encouraged in your community? Is there an ordinance or regulation requiring tree warden review of subdivision plans? Please explain how, if so, this works in your community. (Feel free to say it doesn't happen!)
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

7)   Trees Planted   _____   Trees Pruned   _____

Massachusetts DCR Urban Forestry
TREE CITY USA PROGRAM
Standard 3 Worksheet
Page 2

~ This form must be submitted with your application for Tree City USA~

MUNICIPAL COMMUNITY FORESTRY EXPENDITURES

The total budget figure should clearly link to the submitted FY'12 municipal budget – *if not, make notes on the municipal budget print-out to clarify* – and must equal or exceed **$2/capita.**

Thanks to your feedback, we have modified the budget worksheet below. You may use additional/other categories that more closely reflect your municipal budget. We need **back-up documentation** from your municipality which may include a **budget printout, budget printed on letterhead,** or **letter on letterhead**.

☐ **FY 2014 or** ☐ **Calendar 2014**

Salaries   _____
Tree warden, tree crew, admin staff (may be based on a percentage of time worked on trees)

Tree Planting
May include cost of tree purchases, labor and equipment for planting, planting   _____
materials, stakes, watering, mulching, etc.

In-house Municipal Tree Maintenance
Include pruning, insect and disease control, storm response, fertilization,   _____
watering, stump removal, equipment, supplies, etc.

Contracted Tree Maintenance Work   _____

Vehicular Expenses
Fuel, maintenance, depreciation, new/used vehicle purchases, insurance   _____

Public Outreach and Staff Training
Advertising, public education, professional training, memberships,   _____
Arbor Day event expenses

Resource Assessment Expenses
Survey and inventory expenses, software, consultants to develop management   _____
plan.

Tree Board/Volunteer Time ($10/hour, use educated estimate)   _____
(e.g. # hours **x** # weeks **x** # people)

Other   _____
Include any other expenses not already noted above (grant income, leaf/brush
pick-up (20% allowable), biomass recycling (20% allowable), utilities
(20% of utility work on tree is allowable), etc.

Briefly describe:_____
_____
_____

TOTAL MUNICIPAL EXPENDITURES1 ……………………….. $_____

COMMUNITY POPULATION1, 2 …………………….……………..   #_____

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1 *Transfer these two numbers to Standard 3 on the application and attach this sheet to the application.*

| Sample Work Plan | **City/Town of …**
Tree City USA
2014 Work Plan |

Assessments

The Tree Warden determines the status of trees and schedules any necessary work. Work is scheduled based on priority. Twenty eight requests for tree removals were assessed and removal was deemed unwarranted as a result of resident inquiries in 2014.

Pruning

Pruning is a regular part of maintaining a healthy tree. If the Tree Warden determines a tree needs to be pruned, the tree is placed on the pruning list. Work is completed based on priority. Utility companies such as _____ also complete pruning in the City to maintain their overhead lines. ____ trees were pruned by the City in 2014.

Tree Removals

Public trees may only be removed with the consent of the City's Tree Warden. Only trees that are deemed dead, dying or hazardous can be removed. The United States Department of Agriculture's How to Recognize Hazardous Defects in Trees defines a "hazard tree" as "a tree with structural defects likely to cause failure of all or part of the tree, which could strike a 'target'. A 'target' can be a vehicle , building, or a place where people gather such as a park bench, picnic table, street, or backyard." If the Tree Warden determines a tree should be removed, the tree will be placed on the removal list. Work will be completed based on priority. Once a tree is removed, a stump will be left and the location will be placed on the stump removal list. Once the stump is removed the area will be loamed and seeded. If the site warrants, it will be placed on the tree replacement list. There were 84 tree removals in 2014. The City also held two tree removal hearings at the request of residents.

Stump Grinding

All stump grinding is outsourced to an outside contractor. Work is completed based on priority. Once a stump is removed, the area is loamed and seeded. There were ___ locations in 2014.

Annual Tree Planting Program

Every year the City's Tree Planting Program replaces trees and fulfills requests for trees throughout the City. Trees are planted at the discretion of the Tree Warden. The City planted ___ trees in 2014 and plans on planting ___ trees in 2014.